

Applicant/Serial No.: Etienne Douw Visser / 10/643,247
Filed/Conf. No. 08/15/2003 / Conf. No. 3591
Examiner/Group: Phi Dieu Tran A / 3637
Amendment mailed: 02 / 21 / 2006
Attorney File: JG0737US.CIP (#90578)

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the courtesy extended to attorney Mark Williamson and to the foreign attorney John Galgut who attended the interview on February 15, 2006.

At the outset, the Examiner discussed Leary (US 6,061,969). The Examiner maintained that the parts 18 constituted "legs" within the meaning of the claim presently presented. While disagreeing with the Examiner but to avoid debate, it was proposed that the claim be amended by adding the adjective "cylindrical" to describe these legs. The Examiner indicated that this amendment would meet his objection. On reflection and on rechecking the language of the original specification of the present application, it would seem that the word "tubular" would be a more appropriate word. It would also provide a similar distinction from the disclosure of Leary. This word is included in the claim now presented, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to permit this word instead of "cylindrical."

Thallemer (US 5,743,049) was next considered. Thallemer described units comprising three elongated legs. These legs lie in a single plane. The language of the claim has been amended to specify that in the structure of the invention there are legs that are "arranged in more than one plane to define a tetrahedron" thereby making the feature of difference more clear. It was also argued that this construction was not shown in Leary. It is respectfully submitted that such an arrangement would be contrary to the teachings of Leary. This is because the units of Leary must sustain a substantially vertical load. If the units as now claimed were to be introduced to Leary, they would not be able to sustain the load described in that specification without additional structure. Accordingly, it is submitted that the claim as now presented is allowable over Thallemer.

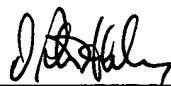
The Examiner, however, pointed out that there seems to be some difficulty if one were to consider Figure 12 of Thallemer. As mentioned in the description, Figure 12 shows several parallel rows 32 of pillars, the pillars of any given row having the same orientation, even though the relative alignment of adjacent rows is offset by 90° (see col. 9, lines 31, et seq.). The arrangement has roof elements 4" in the form of pyramids. The Examiner argued that the way in which these parts are illustrated in Figure 12 raises questions as to the exact configuration of the structural units. It is accepted that Figure 12 is not the clearest, and it is respectfully submitted that, on careful consideration of this figure, it would seem that the arms of the structural elements all lie in a single plane as with all other structural elements of Thallemer. In this regard, it is submitted that had the units (or pillars) been different from other corresponding items in this specification, there would have been language in the specification drawing attention to such differences.

Finally, the Examiner indicated that he would be willing to consider some further claims if added to the application at this stage. Three new claims, viz. claims 11-13, have been added. One of these claims includes all the limitations of claim 1 as now presented. The other two claims are dependent thereon. Accordingly and for the reasons set out above, it is submitted that these claims should be allowable.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider this application in light of the above and to allow this application, and he is invited to telephone the undersigned if a discussion of the application or the present Amendment could expedite the present prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____



D. Peter Hochberg
Reg. No. 24,603

DPH/ck
Enc.: Petition & Fee for Extension of Time

D. Peter Hochberg Co., L.P.A.
1940 E. 6th Street - 6TH Floor

Cleveland, Ohio 44114
Phone: (216) 771-3800 / Fax: (216) 771-3804
e-mail: DPHDOCKET@aol.com

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Date: 02 / 21 / 2006

By: 
Christine Kotran